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LET'S IMPROVE DEBATE

GLENN R. CAPP

Of all the criticisms levied against activities in modern speech departments, debating has certainly come in for a lion's share. It is necessary only to observe the nearest speech magazine to determine this fact. Are such criticisms justified? In a large measure, yes. Who, then, is to blame?

It cannot be that the subject is inherently bad. Debating recognizes certain well known educational principles, the value of which cannot be disputed. It emphasizes the training of the individual rather than the teaching of a subject. It creates interest in vital problems of the day which can but make for better citizenship. It gives valuable instruction in research and the ability to evaluate evidence. It teaches a student to organize his thoughts logically and to analyze problems systematically. Properly taught, it affords the student valuable training in discussion methods and in public speaking. Surely a subject which offers so much cannot be fundamentally bad.

What, then, is wrong with debating? As a subject in the school curriculum there is nothing wrong. The big fault lies with the methods in which the subject is taught and the manner in which the extra-curricular program is directed. In the great majority of cases the debate director is considerably confused over his objectives. Is his task to train students or to make a record for his school in interschool competition? Should he extend the value of the subject to the largest number of students possible, or should he follow the course of least resistance and "coach" only a few students to represent the school? Should he spend long hours working out possible arguments for his debaters, or should he train students along lines of individual research and logical analysis? Certainly these questions present important problems for the debate instructor. It is with a few of the most important of these problems that this article will deal.

To make the problems concrete the results of a recent survey of debating in the Southwest will be used. An extensive questionnaire was sent to junior and senior colleges in Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, and Arkansas, and replies were received from thirty-four. This survey emphasizes the charge that the accusations against debating are largely attributable to the debate director. If this be true, how can he set about to improve the status of debate?

In the first place, he must "train the many" rather than "coach the few." Of the thirty-four schools investigated in the Southwest, thirty-two reported that they participated in debates regularly with other schools, while twenty-four reported classroom work in argumentation and debating. The total number of students receiving some sort of training in debate was approximately 1,000 in the thirty-

four schools reporting. The average number of students receiving training was approximately thirty, with a low of three and a high of 100. Ten schools give instruction to less than ten students annually in debate, while two schools reported a turnout of only three students.

Of the 1,000 students receiving some sort of instruction in debate, approximately 350 are used in competitive debates with other schools, or an average of approximately ten people per school. However, a few schools reported using two or three students in as many as fifty debates annually on a single debate question. These thirty-four schools reported traveling a total of over 80,000 miles in attending debate tournaments and individual debates, and the total expenditure for meeting such engagements was approximately \$15,000.

These facts tend to show that schools in the Southwest are putting considerably more stress upon the competitive phase of debate work than upon the teaching of the subject as a regular course of study. To use a trite phrase, we are putting the cart before the horse.

There is nothing inherently wrong with interschool competition in the field of debate. It is only when this competitive element becomes the ultimate aim of the debate program that it becomes objectionable. The appeal to competition has the possibilities of becoming a valuable motivating force to the teaching of debate, if properly used for that purpose. Competition is a recognized feature of our entire educational program. It is the very basis of our system of grading. Scholarship and fellowship awards are based upon competition. While the ultimate objective of the debate program should be to extend the training to the largest number of students possible, this appeal to competition may serve a useful purpose in attaining this objective.

This survey in the Southwest shows that debate is conducted in one of three ways in the institutions investigated. In the first place, a few schools have no academic courses in debate, and the program consists entirely of the intercollegiate debating. It is probable that these eight schools foster debate only as a means of interschool competition. Debate conducted in this manner is open to grave objections. The debators usually are schooled in "the tricks of the trade" merely for the purpose of winning victories for the school on the forensic platform. Such students are often improperly trained in the fundamentals of speech and of debate, and as a result poor speech methods are fostered. Debate conducted in this way ignores the aim of training students, which should be the principle aim in debate.

In the second place, several schools work the intercollegiate program and the study of debate quite independently of each other. Instruction is offered in the principles of debate, but the teams who represent the school are "coached" especially for the debates, quite independently of the courses of instruction. In these schools no speech work is required as a prerequisite to representing the school in debate, and as a result, poor speech technique is often practiced until it becomes permanent with the students involved. Practice in poor speech technique is certainly worse than no practice at all.

The third, and surely the proper way of conducting the debate program, is to work the competitive program together with the courses

of instruction. Classroom instruction in debate and other courses of speech instruction should serve as the basis for participation in interschool debates, and the right to represent the school should serve as a reward to those who excel in classroom instruction. If the debate director could be made to realize the importance of this principle, the criticisms debating would gradually become less severe.

The debate director can help improve the status of debate, in the second place, by working to have the subject placed in its proper place in the school curriculum. Some ten years ago a survey similar to the present one was made of sixteen colleges and universities in the Southwest. At that time it was found that seven of these institutions made debate a part of the speech curriculum, while in four institutions it was found in the history department, three in the English department, and one each in sociology and science.

The present survey shows that of the twenty-four schools offering debate as a regular course of study, nineteen made it a part of the speech curriculum, and the remaining five made it a part of the English department.

If the full values are to be derived from the subject of debate, it should be made a definite part of the speech curriculum. The emphasis in debate has shifted from the old idea of extreme emphasis upon form and logic to a mutual emphasis upon persuasion and the part that speech plays in the subject. If this objective of debating is realized to the full extent, the subject should be made a part of the speech curriculum. By offering debate in the speech department, training in speech technique can be emphasized without minimizing the effect that form and logic play in the study.

A third problem for consideration in improving debate is that of the status of the instructor. Of the thirty-two schools reporting debate work, only fourteen have instructors in speech in charge. Five are instructors in English, four in history, two in economics, two in psychology, and one each in Government, German, Vice-president of school, and Dean of faculties. In many instances the instructor who is not a speech teacher is doing very good work because of previous training in debate and other phases of speech, but in others the instructor has this work simply because it is thrust upon him.

It seems that the solution of this problem lies within the speech departments of the various colleges and universities. Students majoring in speech should be made to realize that training in debate is necessary to a well-rounded speech program. This condition is far more serious in high schools than in colleges and universities. The average small town high school does not offer more than two or three speech courses, and certainly it should be expected that the speech teacher, who majored in speech in his undergraduate work, should direct and teach the debate subjects. Our colleges need to turn out more people prepared to teach debate.

The foregoing discussion has dealt primarily with debate as a subject for instruction.

It is well to now turn to the interschool program of debate work for methods of further improvement.

One of the most serious problems of intercollegiate debate is that most schools concentrate on too few debate subjects. The number of debate tournaments entered by schools in the Southwest range from one to twelve during a single school year. Almost invariably schools reported using the same question in as many as six to eight tournaments. One school reported using the same team in nine tournaments on the same question. It should be interesting to ask such a student just what he received from his fiftieth debate on one subject that he did not receive in the twenty-fifth. Certainly too great concentration on one subject is an outgrowth of too much emphasis being put upon the winning of debates. The thorough analysis of an important question for debate is one of the principle benefits to be derived from debating, and certainly either more students should be used on the same subject or a wider range of topics should be used.

Another condition closely related to the one just discussed is that most schools concentrate on too few students in interschool competition. As previously stated, while there are over 1,000 students who receive some sort of training in debate, approximately only 350 are used in interschool competition in the thirty-two schools investigated.

The principle problem here is that some schools reported using one team, usually designated as the "first team," in as many as fifty to seventy debates in a single year. Those in charge of debate work should make a determined effort to pass the work around to more students. They should be made to realize that the final aim in debate is not the intensive coaching of a few students for the winning of debates, but the training of the largest number possible. In order to accomplish this purpose, the director should conduct a vigorous program of intra-school debates. Instead of having tryouts for school teams, the director should permit all those who are interested in debate to attend the weekly or bi-weekly meetings and designate from time to time those who are to represent the school in competition. An excellent plan for the beginning of the year is to have numerous lectures and discussions upon the various questions to be debated during the year. Experts in the fields of the debate propositions can easily be secured to address the group and much can be learned from an open forum following such addresses. A liberal use of the panel discussion and the symposium discussion early in the season will do much to clarify the issues of the debate propositions. Group discussion is probably the most effective means of studying debate propositions, inasmuch as it permits all the group to learn from the research of others.

Following some two months of such meetings, it is well to arrange the entire squad into teams and conduct a tournament among the local debaters. Such procedure prepares all those interested in debate upon the propositions for debate, and they are then available for competition with other schools. By use of such a plan at Baylor University over fifty students are annually prepared for interschool competition. Last year thirty-eight students were used in as many as six debates with other schools and a total of over 100 students received instruction in

debate though they did not represent the school. Thus a large number is offered training in debate each year. The director of debate has it within his power to extend the values of debate to a large number of students by use of such a plan.

A final means of improving the status of debate is to give more variety to the debate and public speaking program. The thirty-two schools investigated in the Southwest reported that more than 90% of their debates were held at tournaments. The average number of tournaments entered by these schools annually is five, but several schools reported that their entire program was made up of tournament debating.

While there are numerous advantages to tournament debating, an overemphasis upon this type of contests is open to serious objections. At best the speaking situation found at the average tournament is an artificial one with little or no audience except a single judge and perhaps a time keeper, both of whom have probably heard the question debated numerous times before. This condition gives rise to the common objection that debaters acquire what some term a "debaters style" of speaking.

This objection need not be true if the director will give more variety to the debate program by arranging debates before interested audiences. Debaters accustomed to debating in tournaments should be used extensively in audience debates. This will tend to offset the objections of the evils resulting from tournament participation exclusively. In order to give such variety to the debate program, Baylor University last year organized a student speakers bureau for the purpose of furnishing programs to interested audiences. This bureau furnished ninety-six such programs last year, more than thirty of which were demonstration debates before high school assemblies, civic clubs, and other similar organizations. The audiences for such programs ranged all the way from fifty to over a thousand persons. The debaters were thus enabled to get considerable training in actual speaking situations.

Besides giving the student speakers valuable training by this plan, they are enabled to render a worth while service to many organizations. In one city last year, where there was considerable agitation to change the form of city government, the Baylor University debaters were asked to present a debate before one of the civic organizations on the merits of the city manager form of government. This debate was so well received that the speakers were asked to return and stage the debate before a much larger audience.

In another city a question of local interest was debated before one of the civic clubs and was so well received that the local radio station asked the speakers back at a later date for a full length radio debate.

Only a few of the important problems of the debate director have been purported to have been discussed in this brief article. Undoubtedly there are others equally as important. However, an earnest endeavor to carry out the suggestions herein made should help to improve the status of debate.

AIDS IN TEACHING INTERPRETATION IN HIGH SCHOOL

MRS. LILLAN B. BAKER

Interpretation, as we will use it, implies the re-creation of the printed page, communicated orally, to an audience by an adolescent under the guidance of the instructor.

If I can suggest aids, they will be to problems that develop from the very nature of the two-fold task of IMPRESSION and EXPRESSION, or the nature of the individuals involved—the instructor and the adolescent students.

What elements, over which we have control, affect the ability of an adolescent student in receiving a clear, concise, accurate impression from the printed page?

The most obvious, determining element that effects the gaining of the Impression by the adolescent is the instructor. First, his personality; second, his attitude towards his work and his students; third, his training.

If an adolescent accepts the instructor he will accept the content of the course and methods used by the instructor. The personality of the teacher is the determining factor. This is true by the very nature of the adolescent mind. Each year, moreover, I am more impressed with the ability of the adolescent to evaluate personality. He detects sham, injustice, insincerity.

Personalities that are not accepted are immovable barriers, not only between the student and the instructor, but also between the student and his work.

Should the instructor, because of personality, attitude or training be a hindrance to the student, he should accept the fact as his personal problem that demands self-analysis and correction.

As Dr. Gibbs in OUR TOWN says, after reprimanding his son, George, for neglecting to chop the kindling wood for his mother, "I knew I need only mention this fact to you."

Self analysis and a deliberate willingness to grow and develop is essential to the successful teacher. It would be well if we teachers could say as the woman, when asked what progress she was making in the Christian life said, "I ain't what I ought to be; I ain't what I'm going to be, but I ain't what I was."

How is the most effective way of utilizing this personal magnetism between instructor and student?

The policy of having the instructor read aloud to the class for a number of recitations at the beginning of the course is a very profitable aid. The readings should consist of some memory and some reading from the printed page. No explanation need be given to the class why he is reading other than that of being especially fond of the selections. For these oral readings, the instructor needs must make painstaking preparations.

So profitable is this procedure that shortness of time should not be permitted to influence the instructor to omit this step and rush right into the task of having the students read. For through the reading aloud

to the class, seemingly for sheer pleasure, a great number of invaluable benefits are being secured.

What are the benefits derived from the instructor's readings? First, the instructor has the opportunity to become acquainted with her pupils by studying their reactions. One who has not used this method for deliberate study of the student could imagine the fund of information and understanding that an instructor can gain in this manner.

Second, by reading aloud, the instructor gives a conception of interpretation. Reading to the class sets goals; gives insight into skills to be obtained. This serves as the essential inspiration or incentive to the adolescent student.

Third, by reading aloud the enthusiasms or attitudes of the instructor are transmitted to the student. Enthusiasms is highly contagious in any group but the adolescent student, especially, is susceptible to enthusiasms.

With emphasis on thought and skill in communication, the student who thinks that Interpretation is for "sissies" or a "show-off" stunt is disillusioned.

Fourth, the students have been given a chance to evaluate the instructor. They sense the instructor's wholesomeness, his well-adjusted attitude toward life, his sense of humor. They admire his tastes, his enthusiasms, his skill. They are won by his sincere, friendly attitude towards them. They accept him as an authority, and they proceed to follow him, unquestioningly, as a flock of sheep follow the leader. To an adolescent, a course means a personality. "Science" means, not content, but Professor Blossom. "Math" means Miss Leflar, and with a recall of these personalities, the student unconsciously warms in friendly cooperation and devotion, or freezes and blocks in stubborn opposition.

There is no need to show the relationship between the instructor and the problems of discipline, interest, indifferences, or unwillingness to strive to improve.

The personality of the instructor is the most obvious and controlling element influencing the effectiveness of the student's gaining of impressions from the printed page.

Next in importance, (but of lesser importance), is the element of methods used by the instructor to aid the student in understanding what he reads.

The questions: "Do you understand what you are reading, or, "Are you thinking what you are reading" are not adequate in getting the student to seek a clear, concise impression. The questions are generally answered in the affirmative and yet, "Expression" convinces the instructor that the student is hazy in his understanding and thinking.

Requiring the student to analyze the selections they interpret makes for clearer impression.

The following procedure, I have found to be of great benefit. A short selection is read to the class by the instructor, the students express the selection in their own words, like experiences are recalled by the students. Then the selection is analyzed under the items: Author, speaker audience, setting, central thought, dominant mood or moods, climaxes,

notes, essays of appreciation.¹ Each step is worked out in class, the analysis is put in good outline form on paper in a note-book to be used as a model. The analysis of two or three selections is all that it is necessary to make in class in order to make each step clear.

Then, the instructor explains how the thought-process reveals itself outwardly through the "grouping of words," "inflections" of voice, "emphasis," and rhythm. Each term is explained and illustrated. Suitable symbols are given. The selections analyzed previously are now analyzed in respect to the outward manifestations of thinking-grouping, inflections, emphasis, and rhythms. These analyses are also placed in the notebooks as models. Only after a thorough written analysis, are the selections memorized for presentation. In order to check on improvements, these selections are given at intervals throughout the course. This method works. Thinking the thought intently make for distinct outward manifestations. In turn, consciousness of outward manifestations, makes the thought concept more distinct.

After the methods of analysis and markings are perfectly clear, the student is required to submit an analysis of each his selections prior to its presentation in class. This makes possible not only more thorough preparations, but prevents hurried, last-minute preparations.

Again, there is no need to show the relationship of thorough preparation of the selection (with emphasis on the thought process), and the problems of fear, meaningless reading, and self-display. Thorough written analysis makes for concise, accurate impressions.

What elements (over which we have control), affect the ability of the adolescent student in his task of expressing his impression of the printed page?

Effective expression requires skill in the use of the voice. Again, the teacher presents the theory to the class. In simple words, without technical terms, the instructor explains the formation of tone and the formation of speech sounds. The instructor likens the speaker's tone and sounds to the painter's paint and canvas—his medium of expression. Much care need be taken in this presentation, for the ability to speak is taken for granted. Moreover, adolescents are fearful of becoming affected in their speech. They prefer to be incorrect rather than to be different from their group. The salesmanship of the instructor is truly tested. THE CHORAL READING METHOD is used to correct bad habits by forming new habits. Students are not made self-conscious while working in the group. Materials for choral drills consist of single sentences, or at most, of very short quotations. The nonsense jingle and rhyme,—used for speech drills for younger folks—are replaced by sentences containing a challenging idea or an inspiring thought,—(for the sake of the adolescent). Drill manuals for improving speech provide excellent material. Sentences providing practice in the formation of all sounds are chosen. To choose drill sentences, that include the frequent mispronunciations made in the class or in the particular locality, is wise. Speech skills, like any skills, require drill. The first 10-12 minutes of each recitation is used for voice drills. All the drills necessary cannot be given each day in that length of time, but

¹Richard Hallister, *Literature for Oral Interpretation*. Chap. IV.

the drills can be rotated. The short daily drill, I find, is far superior to the single period each week for voice drills, as some instructors use. These daily choral drills in voice act as limbering-up exercises, and always aid in vitalizing the speech duty which follows, as well as forming correct habits.

After voice mechanism is taken care of, the instructor presents to the class platform technique. Getting on and off the platform, walking, sitting, standing, holding the book from which he reads, are drilled. Such drill need not make parrots or apes of the students. Such drills always increase the student's confidence and self-respect, contrary to the belief of some authorities. Adolescents need skill, and skills are acquired by conditioning and drilling. It is good psychology. But we are unfortunate in looking upon drill, voice improvement, marking selections for grouping, inflection, etc., with disapproval, because of its association with "elocution." But with the drilling of techniques held always AS AIDS to receiving the impression and the expression, there need be no fear of developing undesirable habits in students. Need we advocate that we cease to use fire, simply because fire, when out of control, destroys? Again, there is no need to show the relationship of effective use of voice and platform technique to the problem of fear, or inharmonious voices, slovenly bodies and careless speech habits.

In conclusion, by reading aloud the instructor becomes acquainted with his students, sets goals, instills enthusiasms and is accepted as an authority. By thorough written analysis the student acquires a concise, accurate impression from the printed page. By the direct method of voice improvement, by means of choral reading method, and by instruction in platform technique, the student is aided to express that impression to the audience. By these aids, we not only assist the student to interpret the printed page, but we aid him in developing his personality and thus help to prepare him to fill his place more effectively in society.

PRESENT TRENDS IN ORAL READING IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

T. A. PASSONS

The story of educational trends in America is an interesting and fascinating one to pursue. It is always tinted with local color and influenced directly by the social, religious, economic and political policies of the time. It changes with new thoughts and prevails as an educational policy as that new thought becomes the dominant philosophy in the minds of American leaders.

Miss Nila B. Smith¹ in "American Reading Instruction" very aptly classifies the trends in reading in America into six major periods of emphasis. The first period, dating from the colonization of America to about 1776, was so influenced and dominated by the religious thought of the day that she calls it "The Period Of Religious Emphasis In Reading Instruction." It must be remembered that a period of emphasis in reading is similar to a period in any other phase of history in that it has no definite lines or dates that mark its beginning and ending. This first era was controlled by the Church, influenced by religious thought, and carried on, primarily, under the supervision of the ministry. The emphasis was on those things that dealt with the strengthening of the religious influence. It covers a longer duration of time and is marked by a less rapid change than any other period. The A B C or spelling method of instruction was used. First the children learned the letters, then to spell the word, and then to read the sentence. Oral reading was stressed. The materials used were: The Bible, Psalter, Hornbook, Catechisms, The Protestant Tutor, and The New England Primer. They freely expressed their primary motive for supporting education: a broader, more thorough, and independent interpretation of the scriptures.

The second great era is marked by that Nationalistic-Moralistic spirit that prevailed during and following the War of Independence. This age witnessed the rise of public education in America and might be dated from about 1760 to about 1840. Patriotic, emotional outbursts flavored the trends of the times. The Church could not dominate the policies directly, for a new nation had come into existence that must recognize all religious doctrines and not help one to dominate. However, most statesmen were members of, or leaders in, some particular church or religious organization; they were able to promote the higher moral interests of the religious people in this new nation. This era is called, "The Period of Nationalistic-Moralistic Emphasis in Reading."

The objective shifted from religious training to Nationalism and Morals, because the thought that was uppermost most in the minds of the people always became the primary objective in the educational policies of the day. The emphasis shifted from the A B C method to the sound of the letters, Phonetics came to the front, and oral reading continued to pre-dominate. Oratory played a great part in the social and political life of the people. The chief materials were:

¹Smith, Nila Banton, *American Reading Instruction*
Silver, Burdett, New York, 1934

patriotic selections, literary productions, historical selections, oratorical and informational selections, and rules for enunciation and pronunciation.

Poems, fables, admonitions, and realistic stories with strong emotional appeal filled the textbooks of this period. It also marked the rise of graded readers and more uniform or standard materials. Noah Webster Readers, Lyman Cobb's Readers, and Caleb Bingham's Readers were published during this time.

The third great period of emphasis in reading was influenced very much by those who traveled and studied in Europe, particularly in Germany and Prussia. During that era of sectional strife in America, the school of thought shifted from Nationalism and Morals to the development of the intelligence of the people who were to select the leaders of the nation. This age witnessed great emphasis and growth in public education for the masses. Miss Smith² calls this era "The Period of Emphasis Upon German-Pestalozzian Principles." The alphabet method continued to be used but the word system was introduced during this time and grew very popular in the better school program. Readers were carefully prepared with a definite consideration for the grade. Oratory and oral reading continued to play a very important role in the reading program. This period continued into the 80's.

The fourth era may just be called "The Period of Emphasis Upon Reading as a Cultural Asset." It was about 1880 that many educators began to emphasize the cultural values of reading. They recognized a responsibility of the school to train the child to read, to cultivate in him a taste for good reading, and select that which elevates and instructs. It was during that era that professional books and courses of study were published. Silent reading was growing in popularity but oral reading continued to dominate throughout the period. The sentence-story method of instruction was used in the better schools and was emphasized by the more prominent school men. The World War marked the close of this period and the rise of another philosophy in education.

It was about 1918 that a new school of thought was recognized in the field of reading; this is known as "The Period of Emphasis Upon Reading as a Utilitarian Asset." An "exaggerated" or "almost exclusive" emphasis was placed on silent reading during the years from 1918 to 1925. Up to this time oral reading had been more prominent than silent reading but now oral reading sank almost into oblivion. Writers drew definite lines between speech, oral reading, silent reading, oral language and other traditional subjects. They were drifting away from integration and toward definite subject-matter lines with great emphasis on specialization.

It was during this era that the sciences gained much headway in the curriculum of the schools. Speed, and comprehension of the printed matter read were points of much emphasis. "Skill in rapid comprehensive silent reading" was a phrase frequently used and emphasized. Many new series of readers based on the silent reading

²Ibid.

plan were published and placed on the market. This was the period following the great World War when the minds of men were unsettled; it was an age of social, religious, economic, and political unrest. Many things that were said, done or written were extreme. Opinions were expressed freely, men disagreed continually, changes were inevitable. From this conglomeration of opinions of master minds, came a philosophy in education that dominated trends in education and our reading program. It was recognized that the whole child must be developed rather than a particular phase or part of the child's life. The child must be developed into a well-rounded individual, suited for wholesome living and filled with creative thinking. This period saw the rise of the "child-centered" school of thought. There was a great demand for more liberal provisions of materials for children to read. Children's interests were considered more than ever and those subjects and phases of child development were given more nearly their proper emphasis in the curriculum of the school. Oral reading, oral English, and speech work became more emphasized than for years past. This era is called "The Period of Emphasis upon Broadening Objectives in Reading."

Today, we find the most outstanding and accepted philosophy of reading in the elementary schools, as well as that of education in general, to be a very broad one, centered around a general program, filled with wholesome, worthwhile, motivated-activities in which the child may experience life and through participation in which the whole child may be developed according to his interests and ability.

From a careful examination of recent materials in curriculum bulletins, manuals for Progressive reading programs, and recent professional books and periodicals, we find the trend today emphasizing this integrated philosophy of education and of reading.

Science cannot be neglected for history. Oral reading cannot be separated from speech. Speech cannot be divorced from language or literature from the social sciences. The program is one centered on child-development, and each phase of child training that is needed is incorporated into a unified whole as it is needed.

The traditional subject walls are broken down and education, in the elementary school, is one continuous process. Reading (oral, silent and remedial), speech, voice, dramatics, fluency, conversation, grammar and literature are not classes within themselves but receive proper emphasis in due time as a part of a unit of work. They are a means to an end and not an end in themselves. They are means to a more happy useful, and wholesome life. Perfection comes as a result of certain living experiences which teachers may direct and pupils help in the planning and execution.

Conversation plays a major part in the entire life of the individual. In his social, economic, political, or religious life conversation is one of the major factors that will work for the success or failure of an individual; it should receive proper emphasis in our educational program. Courtesy, attention, and consideration of the audience as well as the speaker, are factors that add to the personality of the individual. When these qualities can come as a result of the

participation in wholesome, dynamic living, more lasting results are accomplished.

We are learning to think of tone, grace, poise, appeal, rhythm, fluency, feeling, carriage, and facial expressions as qualities of an integrate personality which come as a result of motivated-living rather than specific objectives in reading or speech work. They too, are a means to an end rather than an end in themselves.

When a child is ready to leave the elementary school, we like to think of him as measuring up to certain broad objectives to the extent of his ability:

He speaks the American language fluently, his home environment considered.

He reads and interprets intelligently, his mental ability considered.

He can appreciate the beautiful.

He works and plays in a democratic group.

He shows an interest in the health of the group as well as his own.

He has a keener sense of moral and spiritual value.

He has an inquiring mind.

Those who write and publish our reading materials are recognizing these trends and are spending extensively, both in means and energy, to meet this demand. The recent trends can not be met successfully without books, and more books, written NOW and in the interests of children of today. Teachers are recognizing the fact that children bring meaning to the printed page as well as get meaning from the printed page. Reading is a grand experience, filled with thrills and action which bring about development of the child, rather than a selection or assignment to be mastered and pass on to another.

These are the trends in oral reading in the elementary schools as we find them from study and observation of the more progressive school systems and reading programs. Many schools have not accepted this philosophy and probably many school men and women may never adopt it during their active life, but, never-the-less, it is the philosophy that is growing and coming to the front. It is in line with true democratic philosophies and principles; the educational system must of necessity be in harmony with the philosophies and principles of the government that supports it if that government is to survive. To me these trends are indicative of a stronger America resulting from a stronger, more efficient, happy citizenry.

EDITORIALS

With this issue we are inaugurating a new department in the bulletin. After discussing the matter with a number of members of the Association, it seemed that a department dealing with reviews of plays might be of value especially to the secondary school teacher.

We are devoting more space to this department in this issue than we may devote in future issues; we felt the need of giving it a good start. We have tried to indicate any production problems that are apparent to the reviewer. Discussion of plot has been purposely omitted as this is usually available in catalogue descriptions. Weakness in writing is not discussed unless it is believed that these will be apparent in the production.

You will note that each play has been ranked by stars ranging from one to four. If plays are too bad, they will not be reviewed at all; a four star rating will indicate a play of really unusual merit.

The publishers of plays have promised us every cooperation in this new venture. They have carefully selected from their stock plays which they think merit our attention and have promised to send us the new plays as they come from the presses.

If this new department is of service to you, tell us; if you see some way it can be made of more service to you, tell us that also. If per chance you think the idea has no merit we would be equally glad to hear your reaction.

EXCERPTS FROM THE EDITORS REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE¹. During the past year an attempt was made to make each issue of the bulletin discuss only one of the main divisions of the speech field. Voluntary and solicited reactions were predominantly in favor of the policy; the executive committee generally opposed it. The policy has been abandoned.

The biggest weakness of the Bulletin in the eyes of the editor is its lack of appeal to the elementary and secondary school teachers. An effort was made to secure articles concerning their problems, but the articles were not available in sufficient quantity or quality. The effort will be continued, but no promise is made that another years work can completely solve the problem. It is hoped that the new Play Review Department will be of value to the secondary school teacher.

Book Reviews this year will be set in smaller type and reduced from four to three pages. An attempt is being made to organize the News and Notes material in such a way as to present it in less space. Perhaps certain types of this material should be eliminated.

One article of a research nature was published with generally unfavorable comments. Such articles probably should not be published in the Bulletin.

Most of the articles come through direct solicitation by the Editor. This is not a desirable condition.

Many articles used during the past year were contributions of people outside the Southern Association. Some of them were quite

¹Printed at the request of the Executive Secretary.

stimulating. The practice can be overdone, but a limited amount of it is probably of value.

We have operated this year with a minimum editorial staff. This was not our desire in the matter, but resulted from an extremely limited acquaintance with the teachers in the elementary and secondary school field. Considerable correspondence was carried on in an attempt to find the right people for this job. I believe that a good group of associate editors have now been secured.

AMONG THE CONTRIBUTORS

Glenn R. Capp, A.B., L.L.B. Assistant Professor of Speech and director of Debate, Baylor University, Waco, Texas. Taught at Oklahoma Baptist University for one year, and now teaching his sixth year at Baylor University. Author of Debate Manual and Handbooks on debate, and several magazine articles in various speech magazines.

Mrs. Lillian B. Baker is the wife of the head of the Speech department at the University of Arkansas. She is an excellent speech teacher, though not on the University payroll at the present time.

T. A. Passons received his M.A. degree from George Peabody College for Teachers. He taught thirteen years in rural, elementary, and high schools. In 1932 he became Superintendent of the school system at Sparta, Tennessee. During the past eight years he has done much to improve the speech work in this school system.

PLAY REVIEWS

YOUNG APRIL, Auranian Rouveral & Wm. Spence Rouveral; Samuel French; \$25.00; 7m, 9w; extra boys; 1 exterior; High School*** (if equipment available), College**

The play was first produced at the Community Playhouse, Pasadena, California, Dec., 1939. The characters furnish variety enough to make them interesting while no one of them is particularly difficult. The play is laid in California with the action all taking place in the patio of a modified Spanish style home, comfortably and gayly furnished. From an upper balcony, which is visible to the audience, a stairway leads down to the patio. Above the tiled roof of the house can be seen the tops of trees. On one side of the patio is a wall above which are seen more trees and shrubs. The set is difficult and should not be attempted without adequate equipment. It is possible that the set might be changed entirely, but such a change would certainly weaken one of the strongest points of the play—an unusual and attractive set. During one scene, a lawn mower is heard off stage. The lights indicate late afternoon of summer which, during the 2nd and 3rd acts fade into twilight. The costumes are modern and simple.

YOUNG LINCOLN, Wilbur Braun; The Northwestern Press; copyright 1938; \$25.00; 7m, 9w; 2 interiors; High School*; College*.

A play in three acts, an epilogue and a prologue, covering 16½ years in all. The set for the prologue, a corner of the Lincoln cabin, roughly and meagerly furnished, with exterior backing behind one door, is so arranged that it may be set inside the big set for the rest of the show. Action of the rest of the show takes place in the living room of Rutledge Inn, comfortably furnished in the style of 1830. Behind French windows left of center back is a ballustrade with exterior backing. In the prologue, lights off stage indicate bright afternoon; on stage, they are dim and on the curtain dim out completely. In Acts I, II, and III, lights on stage are bright; off stage they indicate afternoon in Acts I and II and waning daylight in Act III. During the epilogue, which takes place in late evening, lights are dimmed to semi-darkness; and during the last scene, blue lights are used to create an effect of clairvoyance, with all lights dimmed out slowly for the final curtain. Costumes are fashions current in the middle 1800's. Fairly full notes are given, and sketches of typical costumes are included.

TISH, Alice Chardwicke; Samuel French; \$25.00; copyright, 1939; 5m, 8w; 1 interior; High School ** College **

The leading role of this play is the *Tish* made famous in stories by Mary Roberts Rinehart. Tish and her two companions, middle-aged spinsters, are the most promising character roles. Another role which will require special attention in make-up is a Mexican servant girl. Very detailed directions are given for all stage movements. The whole action of the play takes place in the combined lunch room and lobby of a small hotel in a remote section of the Southwest near the Mexican border. The furnishings include a few comfortable chairs, a lunch counter with high stools, and a wall safe. The costumes are modern. Exterior backing is needed behind two doors. Sound effects needed off stage: an automobile, glass crashing, a gun shot, and an airplane. Lights on stage are full up except during one scene when they are out entirely. Lights

off stage, seen through the doors leading out, indicate waning daylight, bright moon light, and bright day light during the three acts respectively. All changes in off stage lighting come between acts.

JUNE MAD, Florence Ryerson and Colin Clements; Samuel French; \$25.00; 6m, 7w; 1 interior; High School*** College**

The play was first produced in 1939. Care should be taken to avoid farcing the roles. The set throughout is a comfortable living room. Exterior backing is necessary behind two doors: behind the door center back are seen rows of hedge and hollyhocks; through the French doors in the side wall can be seen a garden. Lights on stage are full up throughout the play; off stage, they indicate late afternoon and night, the changes coming between acts. Sound effects off stage are an accordin and a phonograph playing dance music.

MAN BITES DOG, Frederick Jackson; Samuel French; copyright 1939; \$25.00; 6m, 7w, extra men; 1 interior; High school no; College*** (for advanced amateurs).

A sophisticated comedy liberally sprinkled with italics, evidently intended to aid the interpretation, which it may or may not do. For an actor or director with any ideas of his own, the italics may be a hindrance; those who depend on others for directions might find them helpful, and these people have no business attempting "Man Bites Dog."

The set, an expensively furnished morning room, has French windows on one side which open onto a garden. Costumes vary from negligees to evening clothes and should match the set in elegance. Lights on stage are full up throughout the show. Off stage, they indicate morning and night, the changes coming between acts. Necessary sound effects are a radio and a car stopping.

THE MERRY HARES, Agnes Emelie Peterson; Row, Peterson, and Co.; percentage royalty; 5m, 6w, 2 men's voices off stage; 1 interior; High School*** College***

This sophisticated play was first produced in June, 1939. A Danish servant girl is the most difficult characterization. The set is an elaborate morning room with a series of French windows across the back wall opening onto a wide veranda, making the room and the veranda almost one. Potted plants, shrubs and trees in the yard, and the blue waters of the sound are visible across the veranda. Suggestions are also made for a more simple, though not so artistic, set. The stage movement is left almost entirely to the individual director though much stage business is suggested. A public address system is needed to give the effect of radio over which are heard announcements, cheering, and band music. The costumes are modern sport and street clothes with summer evening clothes for the third act. Lights on stage are full up during the entire show; off stage, in acts one and two, they indicate bright morning light, and in act three, evening. Posters for advertising are available.

DAY IN THE SUN, Edward R. Sammis and Ernest V. Heyn; Dramatists Play Service, Inc.; copyright 1935; \$15.00; 1 interior; 9m, 7w; High School* College*

The entire action of the play takes place in a comfortably furnished living room. At the left is an alcove with three windows, one of which must be practical. Through the windows is seen a porch. Lights on stage remain full up through the show; off stage they indicate late afternoon and night, changes

coming between acts. A public address system is needed to give the effect of a radio announcer, and a siren is heard off stage. One character with very few speeches speaks Italian dialect. Costumes are modern street, and house clothes.

BRIDAL CHORUS, Roberta Winter; Longmans, Green and Co.; copyright 1934 (35); royalty; 1 interior; 8m, 6w; High School* College*

The entire action of the play takes place in a comfortably furnished living room which opens on one side onto a terrace. Lights on stage are full up throughout the show; off stage, they indicate late afternoon, bright afternoon, and night, changes coming between acts. Sound effects necessary are a car leaving and an orchestra playing wedding music. Sport and evening clothes are needed. Flowers for a wedding party of 5 men and 5 girls are necessary. There are almost no directions given for stage movement or business for characters, and no sketch or description of the set is included in the player's book. A Director's Manuscript is furnished with payment of royalty.

LADY, BE GOOD, Dana Thomas; The Northwestern Press; copyright 1940; \$25.00 royalty; 5m, 6w; 1 interior; High School* College*

The curtain lines are the best part of this farce comedy set in an elaborately furnished library of a Park Avenue home. To accommodate all the furniture suggested, the stage must be quite large; however, from reading the play, it would seem possible to satisfactorily set the stage with less furniture. The costumes are simple, the only specific requirements being uniforms for a maid and a butler. Lighting on stage is full up for entire show. Off stage, for Acts I and III, the light indicates morning; Act II, night.

POOR DEAR EDGAR, Wm. Davidson; The Dramatic Publishing Co.; copyright 1940; \$25.00 (\$10.00 if receipts small); 5m, 7w; 1 interior; High School* College*

The play takes place in a rather meagerly furnished, much used room in a college union. Costumes include college, street, and evening clothes. Lights off stage indicate morning, afternoon, and evening, all changes coming between acts. On stage, lights are so arranged that at times, only a table or floor lamp is on. Sound effects include glass and wood crashing, a very old car starting, and a dance orchestra.

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BOOK REVIEWS

READING TO OTHERS. By Argus Tressider. Atlanta: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1940; pp. 544. \$2.25.

If awards were given to the authors of the best speech texts, I think Argus Tressider might well receive one of the highest awards for 1940 for his book *READING TO OTHERS*. It is much more than a book on oral interpretation as the name implies. It is a book that might easily be used in a classroom where the emphasis is on speech fundamentals, voice and diction, or speech mechanics although it is designed primarily as a text in oral reading and literary interpretation. Especially, in the college or university where only a small number of speech courses is offered, could this text be profitably used in a speech fundamentals course as well as in oral reading. In his introduction, the author defines oral interpretation as "the study of voice and the problems of communicating ideas from the printed page to a listener . . . the oral part means everything relating to the speaking apparatus: the physiology of voice plus diction, which includes the proper pattern of speaking. Interpretation means the examination of ideas . . . taken from a page . . . and the projection of those ideas to an audience. One half is more or less technical, dealing with the mechanics of breathing and phonation (the production of voice), speech sounds and the correction of speech faults. The other half is psychological and emotional, taking up the meaning and mood of the material to be communicated." After setting forth this sane yet very ambitious program for teaching interpretation, chapters one and two deal with interpreting meaning and emotion. Five chapters follow on the physiology of voice and the formation of speech sounds through phonetics. The last six chapters make special applications of reading techniques to informal reading situations, dramatic interpretation, acting, radio, and verse speaking. I like personally the sequence of chapters as presented although some teachers might prefer to begin with the work in voice mechanics in order to learn something about voices first and take up meaning and feeling later. Literally scores of pages of exercises are included on such important problems as securing meaning and emotion, voice improvement, phonetic studies, and a host of excellent suggestions for special reading situations. Two sections in the Appendix, one dealing with special problems in voice improvement and the other containing sixty-two prose selections for oral reading, are excellent. The first part really is a discussion of speech correction in which are set forth organic defects, nervous or emotional defects, and functional defects. The teacher conducting classes in speech fundamentals or public speaking as well as the teacher in interpretation and voice science will find very useful the advice and exercises on such special problems as lisping, infantile speech, foreign accent, nasality, articulation, intonation and other special problems. When I say this book is a comprehensive speech text I really mean it. It covers everything, seemingly, except speech composition, argumentation, and debate. It is an excellent reference for the teacher of public speaking, physiology of voice, and phonetics. Already I have included many of the exercises for special problems in voice improvement in my course outline for my public speaking classes this fall. This is truly a book that will enable students to acquire good speech habits and a critical appreciation of literature. Neither of these has been accomplished by thousands of college students who have been subjected to the extreme emphasis in the elementary school on silent reading.

Three million school children have speech defects, many of which could be remedied by the correctional work in oral reading—suggested in this new book.

ANTHOLOGY OF PUBLIC SPEECHES. Compiled by Mabel Platz. New York: The H. W. Wilson Compnay, 1940; pp. 895. \$3.75.

Three thousand years of the best oratory from Homer to Franklin D. Roosevelt are included in **ANTHOLOGY OF PUBLIC SPEECHES**. One hundred and sixty-four speeches, immortal because of their oratorical perfection or because of their profound effect on man's destiny are included in this one-volume edition. One hundred and fifty-three speakers are represented. Each speech is introduced by a brief statement of the author's life and his contribution to oratory as well as an account of the occasion on which the speech was made. In the few weeks this volume has been on my desk I have found myself several times thumbing through its pages for information on the circumstances of some particular speech by a given orator. I think Dr. Platz achieves admirably her objective which she says "is to present speeches to representative orators who have featured in the history of public speaking—orators, who, as in ancient Greece and Rome, contributed to the art of public speaking as well as those orators who have been able through the spoken word to influence the course of history." Inspiration for this thoroughly well-done anthology in all probability came from an earlier work by this same author entitled **THE HISTORY OF PUBLIC SPEAKING**. That this latest volume represents a total picture of the three thousand years covered is to be seen in the periods of oratory included. Chronologically, the following periods are presented: Greek, Roman, Patristic and Mediaeval, Reformation, French Revolution, British, American, and World War. Each period is introduced by a short statement suggesting its importance, trend, and development; and each period is closed with a carefully-selected bibliography of that period. I consider this not only one of the most up-to-date but also one of the most complete collections available for my use. I shall place it alongside **MODERN ELOQUENCE** as verily one of my sepech Bibles. In addition to its usefulness to teachers and students of speech from a strictly speech point of view, I would emphasize its challenge to men everywhere in their struggle for freedom. Several democracies have fallen during the year. Other democracies are being challenged as we enter the classroom this month. If the history of public speaking reveals anything to you and to me, it reveals that freedom of speech is the privilege of democracy. These 895 pages present one hundred and sixty-four speeches but they reveal more than that; they reveal man himslf through three thousand years of struggle for freedom. This freedom has been inherited by our present generation of Americans through the sweat and blood of loyal and patriotic forbearers. From the inspiration of the struggle for freedom represented in these one hundred and sixty-four triumphs of yesterday, let us go into our classroom today determined to inspire our students to accept not only the privileges of democracy but also the obligations and responsibilities of a positive, alert citizenship in our democratic government.

PRODUCTION AND DIRECTION OF RADIO PROGRAMS. By John S. Carlile. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1940; pp. 397. \$3.75.

Here is the book that will answer all your questions about radio. For teachers and students of radio, for the young man and woman interested in a professional radio career, for the business and professional man who uses radio

for their advertising or an occasional community drive, and for men and women actually engaged in radio broadcasting who must keep informed of the latest radio developments, I unhesitatingly recommend the immediate reading of this volume. From the pen of John S. Carlile, Production Manager of the Columbia Broadcasting System, has come the complete story of the process of producing and directing radio programs from the inception of a program idea to its presentation on the air. May I send a personal word to my friends in the South who are teachers or students or directors of radio broadcasting? You will find set forth in these pages by a man of authority and experience more concrete material on modern radio activity than in any volume I have seen. And it is all thoroughly usable in the college classroom. Part I, "The Program and Those Who Produce It," deals with the program idea, its becoming a commercial, the work of the program director along with the director of dramatic and musical programs, the production man and the studio engineer. Part II, "The Production of Musical Programs," discusses musical sound in the studios, set-ups for musical programs, and the musical audience. Part III, "Precision and Routine," is concerned with program timing and the dozen and one details of checking programs before they go on the air. Part IV entitled, "Speech," will be exceeding interesting for all students and teachers of speech. Six chapters are devoted to the announcer, radio drama, directing the dramatic program, sound effects, the layman speaks, and the set-up for educational and variety programs. The Appendix includes much valuable material on such subjects as studio sign language, basic sound effects and how to produce them, turntable equipment for sound effects, microphones in general use, building a studio, a glossary of radio production terms, acoustical research organizations, and questions and projects on radio. Fifty-five illustrations give vivid pictorial views of studios and program arrangements. A carefully selected radio bibliography completes the book. The section on "Speech" should be read by every man and woman who is likely ever to make a speech of any kind. Every student of speech should read the entire book in order to have an accurate view of the newest area of speech development. Every teacher of speech should master the contents of this volume, for from its pages comes the story of success of the commercial world of radio, and all speech students should know that story completely and well if they are to prepare themselves to enter the radio world.

